DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 189 065 SP 016 255

AUTHOR DeJames, Patricia L.
TITLE Effective Parent/Teacher/Child Relationships.
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 7p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Development; *Child Development; Communication Skills; Discipline; Elementary Education; *Parent Child Relationship; Parent Influence; *Positive Reinforcement; Self Concept; *Student Teacher Relationship; Teacher Influence

ABSTRACT

Teachers and parents should seek effective ways of developing relationships with children to exert positive influence on their psychological, mental, and emotional health. The manner in which a child is treated or talked to by parents and teachers contributes to future abilities to cope, solve problems, engage in decision-making strategies, communicate effectively with peers, and interact in the adult world. An environment characterized by open communication, positive self-concept, democratic attitudes, and active listening will prevent many problems that children face in their developing years. (CJ)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED189065

EFFECTIVE PARENT/TEACHER/CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

In today's society, teachers, parents, and children face many problems. In order to resolve these underlying problems and feelings within the family and the school environment, one must be willing to take preventive measures. Subsequently, teachers and parents should seek to find effective ways of modifying human relationships to exert positive influence on children's psychological, mental and emotional health. How the child is treated, trained or talked to by both the parent and the teacher contributes to future determinants of stability or unstability of emotional health, happiness, ability to cope, solve problems and engage in decision-making strategies as well as how he will relate to others when communicating and interacting with his peers and the adult world. This places specific emphasis on both the parent/child relationship and the teacher/student relationship.

THE NEED FOR OPEN COMMUNICATION

The child of today sometimes feels rejected within the home environment. Initially, he is brought into the world as a product of both parents. The parents then provide a teaching and role model for the child. Without guidelines and consistent teaching and learning of standards, morals, and values, the child may be unable to determine right from wrong. Additionally, within the school setting, unless the teaching within the school and the home environment follows a consistent basis, the child becomes confused, sometimes disoriented and, as a result withdraws or rebels. This type of behavior is often due to a lack of understanding and communication within the child/parent relationship or teacher/student relationship.

SP 016255

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Patricia L. De James
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The child should be taught to meet his own needs and to actualize his potential in a positive, productive atmosphere. He should be made aware of his capacity and potential. He should be reinforced in a positive way- not in a negative way. The child should be given the opportunity to gain some insight into his behavior and the immediate effects of his behavior on others. Screaming or hitting the child and telling him what to do is authoritarian and experienced as power-seeking. Also, the child may develop a dependency on the adult. As a result, the child tends to build up resentment and hostility toward the parent as symbolic of authority-power. The child sooner or later may engage in revengeful or rebellious acts of behavior.

POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPTS

It is very important that children acquire positive self-concepts. Positive behaviors engaged in by a child both within the home and school environment should be positively reinforced. Negative behaviors should be ignored, as much as possible. Teachers should emphasize the "good", not the "bad." A child should also be given some type of responsibility, no matter how minimal. This type of attitude conveys to the child that he is useful and that what he does is appreciated. He should be helped to understand that he is responsible for his behavior.

Disciplinary tactics should be consistent, not authoritarian. The child should be given the opportunity to gain insight into both negative and positive consequences regarding a particular behavioral situation. Additionally, he should be given the opportunity to choose which way he will behave, therefore allowing natural consequences to follow.

There are several disciplinary techniques which parents and teachers can learn. One of the most important aspects when dealing with disciplinary

problems is to define problem ownership. In other words, who "owns" the problem? In a behavioral situation, in which the child or student "owns" a problem, the child should not be rescued from the problem. When the child is "rescued" he is prevented from maturing; therefore dependency increases on the adult.

THE DEMOCRATIC ATTITUDE AND PROBLEM-SOLVING

Parents and teachers should try to convey a democratic attitude. They should be willing to help the child resolve his problems and conflicts and help him to cope and deal effectively with future situations. Parents and teachers should try to identify with the child and become his friend, a helper and someone who is interested in him as a person-his physical, emotional and mental growth potential. They must convey to the child that they are also human and make mistakes. Both within the home and the school environment adults create the atmosphere. They can be receptive to the young person's needs and feelings and help the child find alternative ways to meet these needs. Subsequently, this enables both the parent, teacher, and child to relate to each other within an atmosphere of two-way respect, resolving conflicting needs between the child and the adult. The child is taught to gain insight into his behavior and the immediate effects of his behavior on others.

By the use of problem-solving techniques in which both parent/teacher and child give solutions to a problem, an acceptable solution can be decided upon by all concerned and implemented.

This method can be used when the teacher/parent has a problem or the child has a problem.

ACTIVE LISTENING

Teachers and parents should practice listening to the child, and when he has a problem, respond in an honest and caring way, often repeating what the child has told the adult. In this respect adults are responding to the child in an empathetic and understanding way, It is helpful to give the child this type of feedback, hoping to continually draw out the child, and, possibly, enable the child to find an alternate way to solve his own problem. Adults may engage in responding to both the facts and the underlying feelings of a message. When parents or teachers are unable to meet their needs because of the child's behavior, they will generally verbally chastize the child and blame him for their message not getting across. This frequently results in the child building up resentment toward the adult which ultimately may cause chaos and confusion. Instead, convey a message including one's feeling, the behavior of the child, and the immediate effect of the child's behavior on the adult, commonly known as a confrontive I-message. For example, "I feel frustrated when you constantly interrupt me because I cannot get my lesson across to the other students." Giving the child a reason and some insight into his behavior results in a greater chance of the behavior not being repeated. Saying "be quiet" is unacceptable. For example, the child's perception of "quiet" and what is unacceptable may be different from the parent's or teacher's perception of "quiet" and what is unacceptable. "Quiet" is a label. Labels are not specific. The parent or teacher should be as specific as possible when trying to change behavior.

A method involved in problem-solving is known as "brainstorming."

When the confrontive I-message does not yield positive results, and the persistent undesirable behavior continues, brainstorming solutions by both the adult and the child should be utilized. This involves choosing alternative solutions, writing a contract and meeting at a mutually agreed-upon time to discuss implementation of the solution and making a commitment. In this respect the feelings of resentment between the parent, teacher and child is reduced, and power is not used on the child.

One element which is essential in redirecting negative behaviors in the child is that of being honest and listening to the child. Saying "uh-huh or listening intently, and head nodding indicate to the child that you care. Children sometimes possess feelings or problems that need to be vented. Do not judge, tell the child what do to, probe, blame and so forth. Just listen. Let the child try and resolve the problem himself or herself with your assistance. That is part of the growing-up process.

CONCLUSION

When the teacher or parent tells the child what is bothering him/her, be specific, refer to specific behaviors, not labels. For example, the term noise is a label. Focus in on what noise means to you. The child's perceptions of noise may differ fron what yours does. For example, "Jimmy, when you bang on those pots and pans, I cannot hear and talk on the telephone."

Whe you wish for a child to repeat a specific behavior, positively reinforce it immediately. Additionally, reinforcement should be meaningful to the child, whether it is given through a piece of candy, money, or a positive comment to the child. A positive comment can be conveyed as a I-message such as, "I really like when you _____, because _____, and I won't have to worry about _____." Children respond well to

these messages. The afore-mentioned skills and concepts used in dealing with disciplinary problems, or undesirable behavior, have proved to be effective measures when dealing with child/parent or student/teacher relationships and have resulted in the positive communication processes between parent, teacher, and the child.

Some of the above-mentioned ideas are from Dr. Thomas Gordon's Teacher Effectiveness Training and Parent Effectiveness Training Manuels

This article may not be reproduced or printed in any form without written permission from the author.